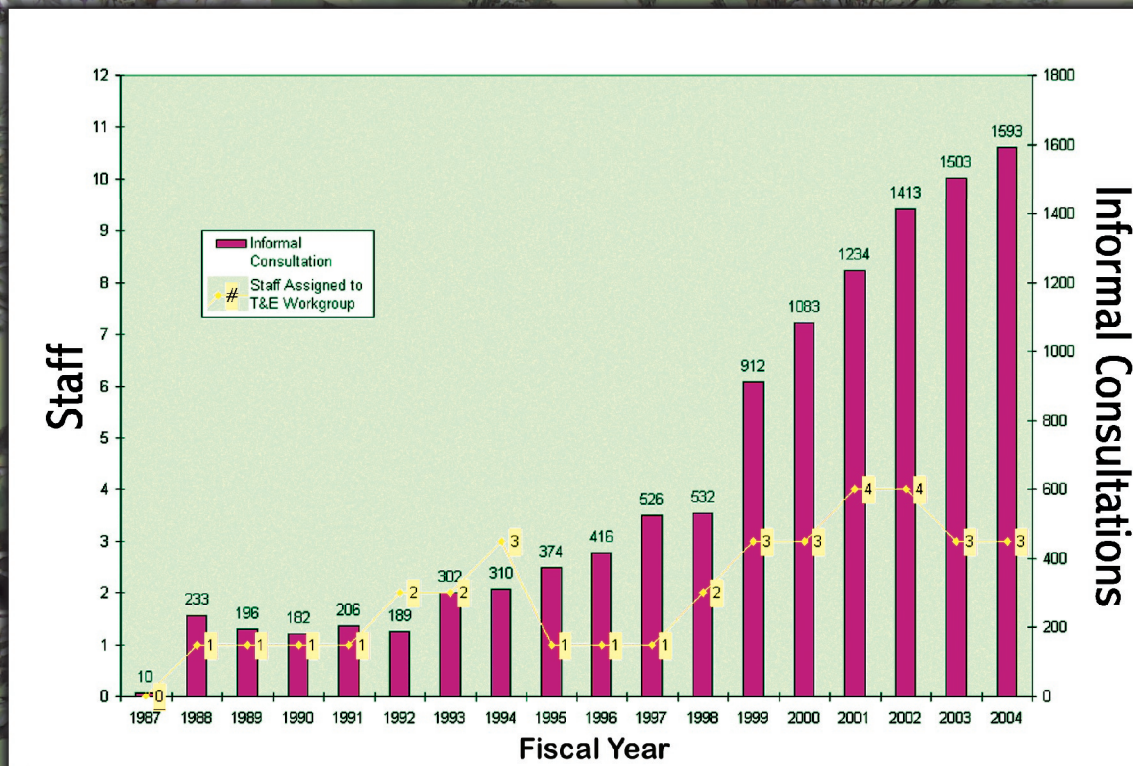


Threatened and Endangered Species



Between 1990 and 2000, New Jersey experienced population growth at a statewide average of 8.9 percent. In many areas development has expanded to the point of near build-out right up to the edge of habitats occupied by threatened or endangered species. Protecting the 13 federally listed species under U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service jurisdiction in New Jersey thus presents a unique and time-consuming challenge.

In fiscal year (FY) 2004 the NJFO provided more than 1,900 informal consultations and technical assistances. Given the size of New Jersey, this is equivalent to 1 development project reviewed for every 4.4 square miles of the State. The NJFO also completed formal consultation and issued a draft Biological Opinion on the effects of beach nourishment, renourishment, stabilization, and restoration projects for:

- 9 federal nourishment/renourishment projects,

- stabilization and/or replacement of 3 seawalls,
- all Army Corps of Engineers (Philadelphia District) permits for beach nourishment or shoreline stabilization, and
- all operations and maintenance activities for current federal shoreline stabilization projects within the Philadelphia District over the anticipated 50-year life of the Corps Beach Stabilization program.

Coordinating with the NJFO, the Corps incorporated an extensive set of conservation measures into the program that will avoid or minimize significant direct and indirect effects to piping plovers and seabeach amaranth.

The NJFO also worked with the Corps to ensure that the remainder of unsuitable dredged spoil materials was removed from the confined disposal facility (CDF) at Stone Harbor Point. The NJFO, the Corps, and Stone Harbor's

contracted engineering firm together developed a restoration design that made best use of the remaining clean sand materials. Approximately 25 acres of piping plover nesting and foraging habitat were restored within the area impacted by the CDF.



Through its newly-initiated Adopt-a-Swamp Pink Population program, the NJFO will involve the public in obtaining trend data on an annual basis to assess the overall health and stability of swamp pink populations. Eleven volunteers enrolled in the program in FY 2004 monitored 14 swamp pink populations, obtaining information essential for recovery of this federally threatened species. Also in FY 2004, the NJFO secured protection for a newly discovered Knieskern's beaked-rush site in Ocean County, completing a management plan and having the site excluded from an adjacent development through a long-term deed restriction. Extensive coordination with Jersey Central Power & Light and Public Service Electric & Gas established within their rights-of-way separate protocols for 5 species (Indiana bat, bog turtle, swamp pink, small whorled pogonia, and Knieskern's beaked-rush) for maintenance where federally listed species are known to occur.

In FY 2005, the NJFO will seek funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Wildlife Services to implement predator control for piping plovers and their chicks. The NJFO will also expand its efforts to engage the public in recovery efforts for federally listed species. Working through the Partnerships for New Jersey Plants workgroup, the NJFO will solicit volunteers to monitor Knieskern's beaked-rush and bog asphodel populations to document population

